

M000 General Preparation Standards

M010 Mailpieces

M011 Basic Standards

011

Summary M011 describes the presort process and presort levels. The section defines terms used for preparation of mail, the definition of a mailing, what can be included in a mailing, and explains Presort Accuracy Validation and Evaluation (PAVE).

1.0 TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Presort Process

1.1

Presort is the process by which a mailer prepares mail so that it is sorted to at least the finest extent required by the standards for the rate claimed. Generally, presort is performed sequentially, from the lowest (finest) level to the highest level, to those destinations specified by standard and is completed at each level before the next level is prepared. Under standards for package reallocation for Periodicals flats and irregular parcels and Standard Mail flats on pallets (see [M041](#) and [M045](#)), mail will not necessarily be placed on the lowest (finest) level pallets (package reallocation is optional, but, if performed, must be done for the complete mailing job). Not all presort levels are applicable in all situations.

Presort Levels

1.2

Terms used for presort levels are defined as follows:

- a. *Firm*: all pieces for delivery at the address shown on the top piece (for nonautomation Periodicals only).
- b. *Carrier route*: all pieces for delivery to the same city route, rural route, highway contract route, post office box section, or general delivery unit.
- c. *5-digit*: the delivery address on all pieces includes the same 5-digit ZIP Code.
- d. [\[6-12-03\]](#) *5-digit scheme (trays) for automation letters*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces is one of the 5-digit ZIP Code areas processed by the USPS as a single scheme, as shown in the USPS City State Product.
- e. [\[1-9-03\]](#) *5-digit scheme (packages and sacks) for AFSM 100-compatible flats*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces is one of the 5-digit ZIP Code areas processed by the USPS as a single scheme, as shown in [L007](#).
- f. [\[1-9-03\]](#) *5-digit scheme carrier routes (pallets and sacks) for Periodicals flats and irregular parcels, Standard Mail flats, and Bound Printed Matter flats*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces in carrier route packages begins with one of the 5-digit ZIP Code zones processed by the USPS as a single scheme, as shown in [L001](#).
- g. [\[1-9-03\]](#) *5-digit scheme (pallets) for Periodicals flats and irregular parcels and Bound Printed Matter flats that do not meet the dimension, weight, and flexibility criteria of the AFSM 100 in [C820.2.0](#)*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces is one of the 5-digit ZIP Codes processed by the USPS as a single scheme, as shown in [L001](#).
- h. *5-digit scheme (pallets and sacks) for Standard Mail parcels and Package Services parcels*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces begins with one of the 5-digit ZIP Code zones processed by the USPS as a single scheme, as shown in [L606](#).
- i. *Merged 5-digit sacks*: the carrier route packages and/or automation rate 5-digit packages and/or Presorted rate 5-digit packages in a sack are all for a 5-digit ZIP Code that has an “A” or “C” indicator in the Carrier Route

Indicators field in the City State Product that allows combining carrier route rate packages with automation rate 5-digit packages and Presorted rate 5-digit packages in the same 5-digit container.

- j. *Merged 5-digit pallets*: the carrier route packages and/or automation rate 5-digit packages and/or Presorted rate 5-digit packages on a pallet are: 1) prepared under [M920](#) and are all for a 5-digit ZIP Code that has an “A” or “C” indicator in the Carrier Route Indicators field in the City State Product, or 2) prepared under [M930](#) and pieces in 5-digit packages meet the 5% threshold requirement, or 3) prepared under [M940](#) and pieces are either all for a 5-digit ZIP Code that has an “A” or “C” indicator in the Carrier Route Indicators field in the City State Product or are all for a ZIP Code with a “B” or “D” indicator in the City State Product and the pieces in 5-digit packages meet the 5% threshold requirement.
- k. *Merged 5-digit scheme sack*: the 5-digit ZIP Codes on pieces in carrier route packages and/or automation rate 5-digit packages and/or Presorted rate 5-digit packages in a sack are all for 5-digit ZIP Codes that are part of a single scheme as shown in [L001](#), and the automation rate 5-digit packages and/or the Presorted rate 5-digit packages also are for 5-digit ZIP Codes that have an “A” or “C” indicator in the Carrier Route Indicators field in the City State Product that allows combining carrier route packages with automation rate 5-digit packages and Presorted rate 5-digit packages in the same 5-digit container.
- l. *Merged 5-digit scheme pallet*: the 5-digit ZIP Codes on pieces in carrier route packages and/or automation rate 5-digit packages and/or Presorted rate 5-digit packages on a pallet are all for 5-digit ZIP Codes that are part of a single scheme as shown in [L001](#), and the pieces in automation rate 5-digit packages and/or the Presorted rate 5-digit packages are: 1) all for 5-digit ZIP Codes that have an “A” or “C” indicator in the Carrier Route Indicators field in the City State Product when prepared under [M920](#), or 2) within the 5% threshold requirement for each 5-digit in the scheme when prepared under [M930](#), or 3) are all either for 5-digit ZIP Codes that have an “A” or “C” indicator in the Carrier Route Indicators field in the City State Product, or are for ZIP Codes with a “B” or “D” indicator in the City State Product and the pieces in 5-digit packages meet the 5% threshold requirement for such a 5-digit ZIP Code in the scheme when prepared under [M940](#).
- m. *5-digit metro pallets for Periodicals flats and irregular parcels and Standard Mail and Bound Printed Matter flats*: the 5-digit ZIP Codes on pieces in carrier route, automation, and Presorted rate packages are all destined for the same mail processing facility listed in [L006](#).
- n. *3-digit*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces begins with the same three digits (see [L002](#), Column A).
- o. *Unique 3-digit*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces begins with the same three digits, and that the 3-digit prefix is so identified in [L002](#), Column A.
- p. *3-digit scheme*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces begins with one of the 3-digit prefixes processed by the USPS as a single scheme, as shown in [L003](#).

- q. *Origin/optional entry 3-digit(s)*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces begins with one of the 3-digit prefixes processed at the sectional center facility (SCF) in whose service area the mail is verified/entered. Subject to standard, a separation is required for each such 3-digit area regardless of the volume of mail.
- r. *SCF*: the separation includes pieces for two or more 3-digit areas served by the same sectional center facility (SCF) (see [L005](#)), *except that*, where required or permitted by standard, mail for a single 3-digit area may be prepared in an SCF separation when no mail for other 3-digit ZIP Code areas is available. For pallets, the SCF sort may include mail for a single 3-digit ZIP Code area.
- s. *Origin/optional entry SCF*: the separation includes packages for one or more 3-digit areas served by the same sectional center facility (SCF) (see [L002](#), Column C, or [L005](#)) in whose service area the mail is verified/entered. Subject to standard, this separation is required regardless of the volume of mail.
- t. *ADC/AADC*: all pieces are addressed for delivery in the service area of the same area distribution center (ADC) or automated area distribution center (AADC) (see [L004](#) or [L801](#)).
- u. *ASF/BMC*: all pieces are addressed for delivery in the service area of the same auxiliary service facility (ASF) or bulk mail center (BMC) (see [L601](#), [L602](#), or [L605](#)).
- v. *Mixed [BMC, ADC, AADC, etc.]*: the pieces are for delivery in the service area of more than one BMC, ADC, AADC, etc.
- w. *Residual pieces/packages/sacks* contain material remaining after completion of a presort sequence. Residual mail lacks the volume set by standard to require or allow package preparation to a particular destination, and usually does not qualify for a presort rate. Residual mail is also referred to as *nonqualifying* or *working* mail.

**Preparation
Instructions**
1.3

For purposes of preparing mail:

- a. *Pieces* refers to individually addressed mailpieces. This definition also applies when *pieces* is used in eligibility standards. Quantities indicated for optional or required sortations always refer to pieces unless specifically excepted.
- b. A *full* letter tray is one in which faced, upright pieces fill the length of the tray between 75% and 100% full.
- c. A *less-than-full* letter tray is one that contains mail for the same destination regardless of quantity or whether a full tray was previously prepared for that destination. Less-than-full trays may be prepared only if permitted by the standards for the rate claimed.
- d. An *overflow* letter tray is a less-than-full tray that contains all pieces remaining after preparation of full trays for the same destination. Overflow trays may be prepared only if permitted by the standards for the rate claimed.
- e. A *full* flat tray is one that is physically full. Although a specific minimum volume is required (at least a single stack of mail lying flat on the bottom of the tray and filling the tray to the bottom of the handholds) before a tray may or must be prepared to the corresponding presort destination, trays must be filled with additional available pieces (up to the reasonable capacity of the tray) when standards require preparation of *full* trays.

- f. A *less-than-full flat tray* is one that contains First-Class Mail for the same destination regardless of quantity or whether a full tray was previously prepared for that destination. Less-than-full flat trays may be prepared only if permitted by the standards for the rate claimed.
- g. An *overflow flat tray* is a less-than-full First-Class Mail tray that contains all pieces remaining after preparation of one or more full trays for the same destination. Overflow flat trays may be prepared only if permitted by the standards for the rate claimed.
- h. A *full sack* is defined in the standards for the class and rate claimed.
- i. **[6-12-03]** A *5-digit scheme sort for automation letters* yields 5-digit scheme trays for those 5-digit ZIP Codes identified in the USPS City State Product and 5-digit trays for other areas. Mail prepared using 5-digit scheme sort must be entered no later than 90 days after the release date of the City State Product used to obtain the scheme information (see [A950](#)). The 5-digit ZIP Codes in each scheme are treated as a single presort destination subject to a single minimum volume, with no further separation by 5-digit ZIP Code required. Trays prepared for a 5-digit scheme destination that contain pieces for only one of the schemed 5-digit ZIP Codes are still considered 5-digit scheme sorted and are labeled accordingly. The 5-digit scheme sort is *always* optional, including when 5-digit sortation is required for rate eligibility; need not be used for all 5-digit ZIP Codes that are part of a scheme; and is available only for automation rate letter-size First-Class Mail, Periodicals, and Standard Mail and may not be used for mail at other rate.
- j. **[1-9-03]** A *5-digit scheme sort for AFSM 100-compatible flats* yields 5-digit scheme packages for those 5-digit ZIP Codes identified in [L007](#). Presorting must be performed using [L007](#) in accordance with the specified effective and mandatory use dates. Pieces prepared in scheme packages must meet the AFSM 100 compatibility criteria in [C820.2.0](#). The 5-digit ZIP Codes in each scheme are treated as a single presort destination subject to a single minimum volume, with no further separation by 5-digit ZIP Code required. Packages prepared for a 5-digit scheme destination that contain pieces for only one of the schemed 5-digit ZIP Codes are still considered 5-digit scheme sorted and are labeled accordingly. The 5-digit scheme sort is optional, except under [M930](#) and [M940](#). Mailpieces must be labeled using an optional endorsement line (OEL) under [M013](#). Packages are placed in appropriate containers using the OEL “label to” 5-digit ZIP Code. Periodicals firm packages must not be part of a 5-digit scheme package.
- k. A *5-digit scheme carrier routes sort for carrier route rate Periodicals flats and irregular parcels (nonletters), Enhanced Carrier Route rate Standard Mail flats, and Carrier Route Bound Printed Matter flats, prepared in sacks or as packages on pallets* yields a 5-digit scheme carrier routes sack or pallet for those 5-digit ZIP Codes listed in [L001](#) and 5-digit carrier routes sacks or pallets for other areas. The 5-digit ZIP Codes in each scheme are treated as a single presort destination subject to a single minimum sack or pallet volume, with no further separation by 5-digit ZIP Code required. Sacks or pallets prepared for a 5-digit scheme carrier routes destination that contain carrier route packages for only one of the schemed 5-digit areas are still considered to be sorted to 5-digit scheme carrier routes and are labeled accordingly. The 5-digit scheme carrier routes sort is required for carrier route packages of flat-size and irregular parcel Periodicals, for Enhanced Carrier



Route Standard Mail flats, and for Carrier Route Bound Printed Matter flats. Preparation of 5-digit scheme carrier routes sacks or pallets must be done for all 5-digit scheme destinations.

- l. *A 5-digit scheme sort for Periodicals flats and irregular parcels (nonletters), Standard Mail flats, and Presorted Bound Printed Matter flats prepared as packages on pallets* yields 5-digit scheme pallets containing automation rate and Presorted rate 5-digit packages for those 5-digit ZIP Codes listed in [L001](#) and yields 5-digit pallets containing automation rate and Presorted rate 5-digit packages for other areas (automation rate packages are not applicable to Bound Printed Matter). The 5-digit ZIP Codes in each scheme are treated as a single presort destination subject to a single minimum pallet volume, with no further separation by 5-digit ZIP Code required. Pallets prepared for a 5-digit scheme destination that contain 5-digit packages for only one of the schemed 5-digit areas are still considered to be sorted to the 5-digit scheme and are labeled accordingly. The 5-digit scheme sort is required for flat-size and irregular parcel-size Periodicals, for Standard Mail flats, and for Presorted Bound Printed Matter flats. The 5-digit scheme sort may not be used for other mail prepared on pallets, except for 5-digit packages of Standard Mail irregular parcels that are part of a mailing job that is prepared in part as palletized flats at automation rates. Preparation of 5-digit scheme pallets must be done for all 5-digit scheme destinations.
- m. *A 5-digit scheme sort for Standard Mail parcels and Package Services parcels* yields 5-digit scheme sacks or pallets for those 5-digit ZIP Codes listed in [L606](#) and 5-digit sacks or pallets for other ZIP Codes. The 5-digit ZIP Codes in each scheme are treated as a single presort destination subject to a single minimum volume (if required), with no further separation by 5-digit ZIP Code required. Sacks or pallets prepared for a 5-digit scheme destination that contain pieces for only one of the schemed 5-digit ZIP Codes are still considered 5-digit scheme sorted and are labeled accordingly. The 5-digit scheme sort is always optional, including when 5-digit sortation is required for rate eligibility. The 5-digit scheme sort need not be used for all possible 5-digit scheme sorts.
- n. *A merged 5-digit sort for Periodicals flats and irregular parcels and Standard Mail flats prepared in sacks* yields merged 5-digit sacks that contain carrier route packages and/or automation rate 5-digit packages, and/or Presorted rate 5-digit packages that are all for a 5-digit ZIP Code that has an “A” or “C” indicator in the Carrier Route Indicators field in the City State Product that allows combining carrier route packages, automation rate 5-digit packages, and Presorted rate 5-digit packages in the same 5-digit sack or pallet. The merged 5-digit sort is optional for Periodicals flats and irregular parcels and Standard Mail flats prepared in sacks. Sacks prepared for a merged 5-digit destination that contain only a single rate level of package(s) (only carrier route package(s) or only automation rate 5-digit package(s) or only Presorted rate 5-digit package(s)) or that contain only two rate levels of package(s) are still considered to be merged 5-digit sorted and are labeled accordingly. If preparation of merged 5-digit sacks is performed, it must be done for all 5-digit ZIP Code destinations with an “A” or “C” indicator in the Carrier Route Indicators field in the City State Product that allows combining carrier route packages, automation rate 5-digit packages, and Presorted rate 5-digit packages in the same 5-digit container.
- o. *A merged 5-digit sort for Periodicals flats and irregular parcels and Standard Mail flats prepared as packages on pallets* yields merged 5-digit pallets that

contain carrier route packages and/or automation rate 5-digit packages and/or Presorted rate 5-digit packages that are: 1) prepared under [M920](#) and are all for a 5-digit ZIP Code that has an “A” or “C” indicator in the Carrier Route Indicators field in the City State Product that allows combining carrier route packages, automation rate 5-digit packages, and Presorted rate 5-digit packages in the same 5-digit sack or pallet, or 2) prepared under [M930](#) and pieces in 5-digit packages meet the 5% threshold requirement, or 3) prepared under [M940](#) and pieces are either all for a 5-digit ZIP Code that has an “A” or “C” indicator in the Carrier Route Indicators field in the City State Product or are all for a ZIP Code with a “B” or “D” indicator in the City State Product and the pieces in 5-digit packages for such ZIP Codes meet the 5% threshold requirement. The merged 5-digit sort is optional for Periodicals flats and irregular parcels and Standard Mail flats prepared in sacks or as packages on pallets. Sacks or pallets prepared for a merged 5-digit destination that contain only a single rate level of package(s) (only carrier route package(s) or only automation rate 5-digit package(s) or only Presorted rate 5-digit package(s)) or that contain only two rate levels of package(s) are still considered to be merged 5-digit sorted and are labeled accordingly. If preparation of merged 5-digit pallets is performed, it must be done for all 5-digit ZIP Code destinations for which it is possible under [M920](#), [M930](#), or [M940](#).

- p. *A merged 5-digit scheme sort for Periodicals flats and irregular parcels and Standard Mail flats prepared in sacks* yields merged 5-digit scheme sacks that contain carrier route packages for those 5-digit ZIP Codes that are part of a single scheme as shown in [L001](#) and/or automation rate 5-digit packages and/or Presorted rate 5-digit packages for 5-digit ZIP Codes in the scheme that have an “A” or “C” indicator in the Carrier Route Indicators field in the City State Product that allows combining carrier route packages, automation rate 5-digit packages, and Presorted rate 5-digit packages in the same 5-digit container under [M920](#). Sacks prepared for a merged 5-digit scheme destination that contain only a single rate level of package(s) (only carrier route package(s) or only automation rate 5-digit package(s) or only Presorted rate 5-digit package(s)) or that contain only two rate levels of package(s) or that contain packages for only one of the schemed 5-digit areas are still considered to be merged 5-digit scheme sorted and are labeled accordingly. If preparation of merged 5-digit scheme sacks is performed, it must be done for all 5-digit scheme destinations in [L001](#), and it must be done for all 5-digit destinations with an “A” or “C” indicator in the Carrier Route Indicators field in the City State Product, under the provisions of [M920](#).
- q. *A merged 5-digit scheme sort for Periodicals flats and irregular parcels and Standard Mail flats prepared as packages on pallets* yields merged 5-digit scheme pallets that contain carrier route packages for those 5-digit ZIP Codes that are part of a single scheme as shown in [L001](#) and/or automation rate 5-digit packages and/or Presorted rate 5-digit packages for 5-digit ZIP Codes in the scheme that: 1) have an “A” or “C” indicator in the Carrier Route Indicators field in the City State Product, when prepared under [M920](#), that allows combining carrier route packages, automation rate 5-digit packages, and Presorted rate 5-digit packages in the same 5-digit container, or 2) are within the 5% threshold requirement for each 5-digit in the scheme when prepared under [M930](#), or 3) are all either for 5-digit ZIP Codes that have an “A” or “C” indicator in the Carrier Route Indicators field in the City State Product, or are for ZIP Codes with a “B” or “D” indicator in the City State Product and the pieces in 5-digit packages meet the 5% threshold requirement for such a 5-digit ZIP Code in the scheme when prepared under

M940. Pallets prepared for a merged 5-digit scheme destination that contain only a single rate level of package(s) (only carrier route package(s) or only automation rate 5-digit package(s) or only Presorted rate 5-digit package(s)) or that contain only two rate levels of package(s) or that contain packages for only one of the schemed 5-digit areas are still considered to be merged 5-digit scheme sorted and are labeled accordingly. If preparation of merged 5-digit scheme pallets is performed, it must be done for all 5-digit scheme destinations in **L001**, and it must be done for all 5-digit destinations possible under **M920**, **M930**, or **M940**.

- r. A *5-digit metro sort for Periodicals nonletters (flats and irregular parcels), Standard Mail flats, and Bound Printed Matter flats prepared as packages on pallets* results in 5-digit metro pallets containing carrier route, 5-digit, and 3-digit packages (automation and Presorted) for the 5-digit ZIP Codes listed in **L006**. The ZIP Codes in **L006** are treated as a single presort destination, with no further separation by 5-digit ZIP Code required. The 5-digit metro sort is optional and need not be done for all possible destinations in **L006**.
- s. A *3-digit scheme sort* yields 3-digit scheme trays for those 3-digit ZIP Code prefixes listed in **L003** and 3-digit trays for other areas. The 3-digit ZIP Code prefixes in each scheme are treated as a single presort destination subject to a single minimum tray volume, with no further separation by 3-digit prefix required. Trays prepared for a 3-digit scheme destination that contain pieces for only one of the schemed 3-digit areas are still considered 3-digit scheme sorted and are labeled accordingly. The 3-digit scheme sort is required for automation rate letter-size First-Class Mail, Periodicals, and Standard Mail and is not permitted to be used for mail entered at another rate.
- t. An *origin 3-digit* (or *origin 3-digit scheme*) tray/sack contains all mail (regardless of quantity) for a 3-digit ZIP Code (or 3-digit scheme) area processed by the SCF in whose service area the mail is verified. If more than one 3-digit (or 3-digit scheme) area is served, as indicated in **L005**, a separate tray must be prepared for each.
- u. An origin/optional entry SCF sack contains all 5-digit and 3-digit packages (regardless of quantity) for the SCF in whose service area the mail is verified. At the mailer's option, such a sack may be prepared for the SCF area of each entry post office. This presort level applies only to nonletter-size Periodicals prepared in sacks.
- v. The *required at [quantity]* instruction (e.g., "required at 10 pieces") means that the particular unit *must* be prepared for the corresponding presort level whenever the specified quantity of mail is reached or exceeded. Packages and containers may contain more than the specified *required at* quantity up to the applicable maximum physical size. Subject to applicable rate eligibility standards, smaller quantities may be prepared only if permitted. Where specified by standard, required preparation applies only if the mailer chooses to qualify for the corresponding rate.
- w. The *optional at [quantity]* instruction means that the particular unit *may* be prepared for the corresponding presort level whenever the specified quantity of mail is reached or exceeded. Packages or containers may contain more than the specified *optional at* quantity up to the applicable maximum physical size. Smaller quantities may be prepared only if permitted by applicable rate eligibility standards. Standards for quantities with which preparation is optional are often followed by standards for larger quantities with which preparation is required.

- x. *Entry [facility]* (or *origin [facility]*) refers to the USPS mail processing facility (e.g., “entry BMC”) that serves the post office at which the mail is entered by the mailer. If the post office where the mail is entered is not the one serving the mailer’s location (e.g., for plant-verified drop shipment), the post office of entry determines the *entry* facility. *Entry SCF* includes both single-3-digit and multi-3-digit SCFs. *Entry BMC* includes subordinate ASFs unless otherwise specified.
- y. The *group pieces* instruction means the pieces are to be sorted together as if to be packaged but not actually secured into a package. Package labels and other package identification methods may be used for unsecured groups of pieces as permitted by standard.
- z. A *package* is a group of addressed pieces secured together as a unit. The presort process considers the total number of pieces available for the particular presort destination and assembles them into groups meeting applicable volume and size standards. When the standards for the rate claimed require securing the pieces in each group together, the result is a package. The term *package* does not apply to unsecured groups of pieces (e.g., pieces prepared in trays and identified by separator cards or tic marks). Package preparation is described in [M020](#).
- aa. A *tic mark* is defined as a solid black rectangle that must be printed on both the front side (extending over the top) and back side (flap side) of the envelope. Tic marks may be used in lieu of separator cards for First-Class Mail and Standard Mail automation mailings and separator cards or rubber bands in Periodicals and Standard Mail nonautomation carrier route mailings prepared in full 5-digit carrier routes trays. Tic marks must be printed on the top edge of the first mailpiece in each carrier route grouping during the mailpiece production process and must meet the following specifications:
 - (1) Color: black.
 - (2) Reflectance and Contrast Ratio: The tic mark must meet the reflectance and contrast ratio specifications in [C840.5.0](#).
 - (3) Location: The tic mark must extend along the top edge of the envelope, to the left of center line of the envelope. Its location must be referenced to the center line. The right edge of the tic mark must be 0.5 inch (± 0.125 inch) from the center line of the envelope.
 - (4) Size: The width of the tic mark must be 0.5 inch (± 0.125 inch). The tic mark must extend over the top of the envelope, down each side a distance of 0.25 inch (± 0.125 inch). When a second tic mark is used to indicate a tray break at the end of the tray, all specifications are the same as for one tick mark, except for the location on the envelope. When a second tic mark is used on the last piece in a tray to indicate a tray break, the right edge of the second tic mark must be 0.5 inch (± 0.125 inch) from the left edge of the first tic mark.
- ab. An *overflow sack for Parcel Select (Parcel Post) DSCF rate mail* is a 5-digit scheme or 5-digit sack prepared with fewer than seven pieces after all other sacks for that same 5-digit scheme or 5-digit ZIP Code area are prepared with seven or more pieces per sack as required by [M710](#). If all of the mail is sacked under [M710](#), only one overflow sack is permitted for each 5-digit scheme or 5-digit ZIP Code. If a mailing is prepared on pallets, remaining pieces of Parcel Post mail may be prepared in one or more 5-digit scheme or 5-digit overflow sacks only after one or more 5-digit scheme or 5-digit pallets are prepared to meet the minimum pallet requirement specified in [M045](#). Pieces in overflow sacks qualify for the Parcel Select (Parcel Post) DSCF rates.

- ac. An *overflow pallet in a Parcel Select (Parcel Post) DSCF rate mailing* is a 5-digit scheme or 5-digit pallet containing pieces that remain after one or more 5-digit scheme or 5-digit pallets have been prepared to meet the minimum pallet requirement specified in [M045](#). Only one overflow pallet per 5-digit scheme or 5-digit ZIP Code area is permitted for Parcel Select (Parcel Post) DSCF rate mail palletized under [M045](#). Pieces on overflow pallets qualify for the DBMC rates.
- ad. A “*logical*” *presort destination* represents the total number of pieces that are eligible for a specific presort level based on the required sortation, but which might not be contained in a single package or in a single container (i.e., sack, pallet) due to applicable preparation requirements or the size of the individual pieces. For example, there may be 42 mailpieces for ZIP Code 43112 forming a Standard Mail “logical” 5-digit package, and they are prepared in three physical 5-digit packages because of the applicable weight and height restrictions on packages. For pallets, 2,800 pounds of mail may be destined to an SCF destination, and these would form the “logical” SCF pallet, but the mail is placed on two physical SCF pallets each weighing 1,400 pounds because of the 2,200 pound maximum pallet weight requirement.
- ae. [\[4-3-03\]](#) *Co-packaging* is an alternate preparation method available under [M950](#) for First-Class Mail, Periodicals, and Standard Mail that allows the combining of flat-size automation rate and Presorted rate pieces within the same package under the single minimum package size requirement. Co-packaging is available also for combining within the same package flat-size Bound Printed Matter Presorted rate pieces qualifying for and claiming the barcoded discount and Presorted rate pieces not qualifying for the barcoded discount. Regardless of the class of mail, pieces may not be combined in more than one physical package for each logical presort destination unless presented using an approved manifest mailing system under [P910](#).

Mailings

1.4

Mailings are defined as:

- a. General. A mailing is a group of pieces within the same class of mail and, except for certain parcel rates, the same processing category that may be sorted together and/or presented under a single minimum volume mailing requirement under the applicable standards. Generally, types of mail that follow different flows through the postal processing system (e.g., automation, nonautomation carrier route, and other nonautomation) and mail for each separate class and subclass must be prepared as a separate mailing. Other specific standards may define whether separate mailings may be combined, palletized, reported, or deposited together.
- b. First-Class Mail. Cards and letters must be prepared as separate mailings except that they may be sorted together if each meets separate minimum volume requirements. The types of First-Class Mail listed below must not be part of the same mailing despite being in the same processing category (see [M910](#) and [M950](#) for advanced preparation options for flat-size mail):
 - (1) Automation rate and any other type of mail.
 - (2) Presorted rate and any other type of mail.
 - (3) Single-piece rate and any other type of mail.
 - (4) Machinable and nonmachinable pieces.
- c. Periodicals. Mail qualifying for the In-County rates may be part of a mailing that includes pieces eligible for the Outside County rates. Mail at carrier route rates, nonautomation Presorted rates, and automation rates must each be

sorted as separate mailings. However, each of these mailings may be reported on the same postage statement if the pieces are for the same publication and edition. See [M041](#), [M045](#), [M210](#), and [M220](#) for copalletized, combined, or mixed-rate mailings. See [M900](#) for advanced preparation options for nonletter-size mail.

- d. [\[8-10-03\]](#) Standard Mail. Except as provided in [E620.1.2](#), the types of Standard Mail listed below may not be part of the same mailing. See [M041](#), [M045](#), [M610](#), [M620](#), and [M900](#) for copalletized, combined, or mixed-rate mailings.
 - (1) Automation Enhanced Carrier Route and any other type of mail.
 - (2) Automation rate and any other type of mail.
 - (3) Enhanced Carrier Route and any other type of mail.
 - (4) Enhanced Carrier Route letter rate pieces and Enhanced Carrier Route nonletter rate pieces.
 - (5) Presorted rate mail and any other type of mail.
 - (6) Machinable and nonmachinable pieces.
 - (7) Except as provided by standard, Regular mail may not be in the same mailing as Nonprofit mail, and Enhanced Carrier Route mail may not be in the same mailing as Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route mail.
 - (8) Customized MarketMail and any other type of mail.
- e. [\[4-3-03\]](#) Package Services. Except for single-piece rate pieces not otherwise subject to a minimum mailing requirement that are presented under an approved manifest mailing system under [P910](#), the types of Package Services listed below may not be part of the same mailing even if in the same processing category. See [P910](#) and [M950](#) for the advanced preparation options available for flat-size Bound Printed Matter.
 - (1) Parcel Post mail and any other type of mail.
 - (2) Bound Printed Matter and any other type of mail.
 - (3) Media Mail and any other type of mail.
 - (4) Library Mail and any other type of mail.

2.0 PRESORT ACCURACY VALIDATION AND EVALUATION (PAVE)

Basic Information

- 2.1 The Presort Accuracy Validation and Evaluation (PAVE) program is a process to evaluate presort software and determine its accuracy in sorting address files under DMM standards. PAVE is available only to software and hardware manufacturers (i.e., companies that develop presort software or manufacture presorting equipment). PAVE certification does not guarantee acceptance of customer mail prepared with PAVE-validated hardware/software.

Process

- 2.2 PAVE evaluates the accuracy of presort products by providing test address files to vendors. Vendors process the test file(s) through their presort software or hardware and return the resulting postage statement facsimile(s) and other presort documentation to the USPS National Customer Support Center (NCSC) for evaluation of the answers. Each test file is evaluated for its accuracy of presort, compliance with current DMM standards, accuracy of sack/tray/pallet tag labels, and general acceptability of computer-generated facsimiles of postage statements and other presort documentation. If the answers are accurate, the vendor's presort product is validated for a 12-month period or until the end of the current annual period.

Participation

- 2.3 For information on participation in PAVE, presort product developers may request the *PAVE Program Technical Guide* from the NCSC by calling 1-800-238-3150. Participants may use the PAVE form included in that guide to order PAVE test files.